

anniversary of title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. It says:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

For 50 years, those words have changed the lives of American women and girls and their families for the better. As a mom, I was able to watch my daughter excel on a more level playing field, and I look forward to watching my granddaughter do the very same thing. Today, more women than ever are competing for the awards and scholarships once reserved for men. And wouldn't you know it—more women than men graduate from college. In short, title IX means something to women and girls in this country. It has opened countless doors of opportunity.

Today, I would like to invite all of my colleagues to join me in supporting a simple resolution celebrating the promise of title IX. It recognizes the 50th anniversary, it honors the work of women's rights activists who led the fight for equal treatment among men and women in education, and it encourages all women and girls in the United States to continue to pursue academic and athletic accomplishments if they so choose.

I thank my colleagues in advance for joining me as we celebrate the women and girls in this country and all of their beautiful potential.

#### INFLATION

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, the Senate is back in session, and still we have no indication from the White House or my Democratic colleagues that they have a plan to lower inflation.

Tennesseans are frightened. You would be, too, if you consistently found more month at the end of your paycheck than paycheck at the end of your month. It is getting harder to stretch the pennies and nickels and dimes, and talking points aren't going to fix this problem.

The White House keeps telling people that if they hang on just a little bit longer, they are going to be all right, but that is not how it works in the real world. In the real world, at a certain point, you run out of rope to hang on to.

People are looking at this transition economy, and they are saying: What are we transitioning to? It is not what they want for their economic future. It is no longer a matter of just trying to make things work; you just can't pay the bills anymore. The gas tank stays empty or you go to bed hungry.

Now, it is clear that Joe Biden and the Democrats know that the country has reached a tipping point, but rather than offering hope, they have settled into blaming everyone from congressional Republicans to foreign dictators

for the problem. That is not what the American people want to hear. They know who got us in trouble, and they know it wasn't Vladimir Putin; it was Joe Biden and the Democrats.

It is the people—the Democrats who are controlling every branch of government in this town. Yes, they have done it, and no amount of scapegoating will change the fact that the American people have been watching closely over the past year and a half, and they know things have gone terribly wrong.

The Biden administration abandoned our recovery, spent trillions on a reckless spending spree, and then panicked when all that spending caused record-high inflation. No, it is not temporary. The country doesn't need a pep talk; they need Joe Biden and the Democrats to reverse course before we fall into a recession, if we haven't done so already.

There are things the administration can do right now that will pull us back from the brink.

It is time to take the taxpayer-funded credit card away. The American people can't afford what the Democrats are selling, and they wouldn't want it even if they could afford it. They know this is wasteful, out-of-control, reckless spending.

Next, the President must stop expanding the size and power of the Federal Government. Stop hiring bureaucrats we don't need at salaries we can't afford to write regulations that only exist to take more money out of people's paychecks.

Democrats would also be wise to get the regulators we do have out of the way—especially when it comes to the energy sector—restart the Keystone XL Pipeline, and make America energy independent again. Go back to drilling in Alaska, offshore, fracking. Return it all so that we once again are energy independent.

Finally, there is something we can do right here in the Senate that would keep future spending and inflation in check. I have introduced legislation that would require a supermajority to pass a spending bill during times of high inflation. It is good common sense, so we should put it up for a vote.

It is time for each of us to go on the record and let the American people know what our priorities are. They are tired of what they are seeing coming out of Washington, DC. I am glad they are paying attention. I am so pleased that Tennesseans are paying closer attention now than ever before.

I do think that it is appropriate that President Biden, the White House, the executive branch, and the Democrats who are in charge of Capitol Hill go on the record and decide if they are going to stand with that "Build Back Broke" agenda, stand with the radical left, or are they going to stand for the prosperity and safety of the American people? Tennesseans know what the right answer would be.

Whether I am in church, whether I am out at one of the grandkids' sport-

ing event, whether I am at the MoonPie Festival in Bell Buckle, I hear it from everyone—this spending is out of control.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### TRIBUTE TO CAROLE JOHNSON

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I have the distinct honor of recognizing Carole Johnson of Mineral County for her dedication to the Forest Service and her 50-plus years—50-plus years—of public service to the people of Montana.

Raised in Superior, MT, Carole graduated from Montana State University and joined the U.S. Forest Service in 1971. Carole started as a seasonal recreational employee on the Superior Ranger District of the Lolo National Forest and has since worked in nearly every facet of the Forest Service, including firefighting, logistics, silviculture, surveying, mining, and conservation education. In 2015, Carole was named "Superior District Ranger," the post she has held until retiring earlier this spring. According to most accounts, at the time of her retirement, Carole was the longest tenured Federal employee in the State of Montana.

Anyone who knows Carole will tell you that she exemplified the definition of a "public servant." For more than 50 years, she served her community with unmatched institutional knowledge and professionalism. She has been a voice of reason in debates over public lands management, emphasizing that forest management and conservation truly go hand in hand. As District Ranger, Carole worked tirelessly to increase the timber output on the Superior District to help benefit the local economy and support wildfire mitigation in the community.

Outside of her role at the Forest Service, Carole is active in her community. She serves on many boards, including the Mineral Community Hospital Board, the Mineral Fair Board, and the Glacier Country Tourism Board. Through her commitment to public service, it is clear that Carole has long been a well-respected and beloved member of the Mineral County community.

It is my honor to recognize Carole for her dedication to the Forest Service and her 50-plus years of public service to the great State of Montana.

Carole, thank you for your many years of public service and your commitment to improving our public lands and our forests. I wish you all the very best in your retirement. You truly make Montana proud.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Illinois.

#### UKRAINE AND LITHUANIA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last week, Senator PORTMAN of Ohio and I hosted a group of visiting members of Parliament from Ukraine. We were joined by colleagues from both sides of the aisle in a continued demonstration of bipartisan support for that beleaguered country.

One of the Ukrainian Parliamentarians included a key negotiator with the Russians, David Arakhamia. He was clear in his assessment: The Russians won't negotiate seriously unless confronted with strength. I agree. We must not let Russia regroup and retrench in the eastern part of Ukraine.

We are now in the fourth month of this horrific war, launched without provocation by Russian war criminal Vladimir Putin to fortify his fragile ego and his warped nostalgia for Soviet horror stories. We all recall the initial assessments that Ukraine and its democratically elected government would fall within days of the Russian military assault. The Russians, for months, poised on the border of Ukraine a mighty force—armored military, virtually everything imaginable. Well, guess what. It not only didn't happen, but the Russian military was turned back decisively in their effort to take Kyiv.

In the war-torn months since, the government of Ukraine has become a symbol of freedom, of strength, determination, and defiance around the world. In fact, key leaders from Europe visited Kyiv last week and pledged their support for Ukraine's membership in the European Union.

President Biden has played a key role in rallying NATO allies and providing equipment and support that have allowed the Ukrainians to heroically defend their nation. He has committed more than \$6.3 billion in security assistance to Ukraine since the beginning of the Biden administration, with \$5.6 billion provided since the beginning of the war alone.

This kind of security aid typically takes months to process and deliver, but weapons are being delivered to Ukraine at unprecedented speed, some in as little as 48 hours. Technical assistance, training, and humanitarian aid continue in parallel.

In fact, under President Biden's leadership, the NATO alliance has never been more unified or formidable, including with two new aspiring members, Finland and Sweden, hoping to join soon—a step I strongly support. Imagine, Vladimir Putin started this vicious war against Ukraine to weaken NATO. He strengthened that organization, and now two pivotal nations in Europe have asked to join NATO for the first time—an indication to Putin that NATO's days are ahead, not behind, it.

Despite these historic successes, we must continue to adjust our support for

what is likely to be a protracted fight. The Ukrainian military needs long-range artillery and other key military equipment to withstand and repel the Russian onslaught.

I am joining Senators PORTMAN, BLUMENTHAL, and GRASSLEY in a letter to Secretary of Defense Austin this week urging more long-range rocket artillery for Ukraine, which the administration is reportedly reviewing at this very moment.

The urgent needs go beyond weapons. Ukraine's economy and food exports—exports that feed some of the world's poorest nations—cannot be held hostage to Vladimir Putin's cruelty. For the record, more than 20 million tons of Ukrainian grain exports are stopped because of a Russian blockade of Ukrainian ports, and it is estimated that barely half of Ukraine's harvest can be exported this year.

Secretary of State Blinken rightly has accused Russia of using food as a weapon of war, and there are credible reports that Russia has stolen Ukrainian grain—imagine this—only to simply resell it on the world market.

One has to ask, when you consider this barbaric act, following other barbaric acts: Does Vladimir Putin really believe he is going to restore the moral authority of Russia by his actions? Is this really the kind of behavior, incidentally, that China wants to be associated with?

So our task and that of our allies must include not only a sustained and updated supply of critical weaponry but also help to reopen and secure Ukrainian ports and find alternative land routes for this year's harvest.

We must support efforts announced by Attorney General Garland today in his visit to Ukraine to help identify, apprehend, and prosecute those involved in war crimes. Here in the Senate, we can help that effort by passing the bipartisan Justice for Victims of War Crimes Act. I have introduced this bill with Senator GRASSLEY to ensure that perpetrators of war crimes in Ukraine and elsewhere cannot find sanctuary in the United States of America.

I also urge my colleagues not to delay approval of Finland and Sweden into NATO and to never again entertain the weakening of this critical Western alliance.

Let me also take a moment to comment on threats made over the weekend to one of our NATO allies, a nation which still has a recent stark memory of Soviet horror. I refer to Lithuania. Lithuania is one of the Baltic States that led the effort for independence from the Soviet Union.

Who can forget the Baltic Way, a human chain of 2 million people who joined hands across Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania 33 years ago to call for independence from the Soviet Union? Just a few years later, in July 1991, the Russian Government recognized the Baltic nations' independence during the historic end of Soviet tyranny in

Eastern Europe, recognizing that the Russian people were ready to give Baltic States a future.

Since then, Lithuania has flourished as a vocal and vibrant member of the European Union and NATO. This small nation of nearly 3 million people has never forgotten its own struggle for freedom. Lithuania was an early ally of Ukraine's in its fight with Russia, going back to 2014. It has stood firm against its neighboring dictator in Belarus, the Putin puppet Alyaksandr Lukashenka, and against Chinese economic bullying for increasing its trade relationship with Taiwan.

Over the weekend, Russia actually threatened Lithuania, which was preventing goods sanctioned by the EU from being transported through its territory to the Russian territory of Kaliningrad. Lithuanian Foreign Minister Landsbergis, who is accustomed to Russian threats, said:

It's not Lithuania doing anything. It's European sanctions that started working from 17 June.

Feigned Russian outrage over Lithuania's actions limiting the movement of these goods already sanctioned while Russia is bombing entire peaceful civilian areas to rubble in Ukraine shows the depth of Putin's madness.

President Biden and NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg have been very clear that the organization's commitment to the common defense is ironclad; it will protect every inch of member territory. Vladimir Putin should think carefully about the NATO commitment and the horrific cost he has already imposed on the Russian and Ukrainian people before making any further threats and continuing his war crimes in Ukraine.

Mr. President, it has been my good fortune to have visited Lithuania many times. My mother was born there. I have a special affection for that land and its people. I was there in the darkest of Soviet times in 1978. I am glad I went. As sad and depressing as it was, it was important for me to see that moment in history.

To see Lithuania today is to see a brandnew democracy, thriving in its belief and values of individual people and the determination to continue with a free economy and an open democracy. They have come and rallied to the side of many around them who are being terrorized by Lukashenka in Belarus and by Putin in Ukraine. And Lithuania speaks up. This small nation of fewer than 3 million people is a nation which is determined to stand for principle and values.

I want to make certain they understand that there are those of us here in the U.S. Congress who will never forget the battle they waged to become independent of the Soviet Union and their determination to stay in that position.

I was proud to be one of the voices in the chorus calling for the Baltic States to be part of the NATO alliance. They saw it as their day of liberation from fear, from the Soviet Union—then Russia, now Putin. We have to make sure